
THE ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

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BRING THE PERPETRATORS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES TO JUSTICE!

PRESS STATEMENT, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, 7 MAY 2008

The Ethiopian Community Association in South Africa has a proud tradition of activism, and once again issues this joint communiqué in association with the support groups of the Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party and The United Ethiopian Democratic Forces on the occasion of the planned visit of Mr Meles Zenawi, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, to South Africa. Reliable sources indicate that the embassy is using gullible Ethiopians, opportunists and the supporters of the sectarian regime to finalize the reception for Meles. They have hired propagandists.

Meles Zenawi leads a blood thirsty minority regime. The number of people that were killed during the last 17 years of Meles Zenawi's misrule warrants international investigation. The perpetrators of the grand massacres in Addis Ababa, Afar, Ambo, Awassa, Borena, Hosaina, Gambella, Gojam, Gonder, North Shoa, Nekemt, Ogden, Tigray and other places are well known to Ethiopians. To counter the international campaign for investigation, the dictatorial regime is spending millions, closing diplomatic doors and also confusing Ethiopian emigrants in South Africa and the rest of the world through sectarian politics, and making false economic promises. The fact is in 2008 there are over 10 million Ethiopians that need food aid. There is rampant inflation and unknown amount of war expenditure.

In April 2008 the minority regime made yet another effort to legitimize its atrocities. It administered a local election in which it was the only contestant. This is in addition to the stolen election of May 15, 2005 in which elected parliamentarians were jailed for more than 20 months on concocted charges. The commander of the minority regime himself was personally responsible for ordering the massacre of civilians in Addis Ababa and the rest of Ethiopia. It is for this blood thirsty dictator that Ethiopians in South Africa are being invited to attend a reception! It is evident that Ethiopia has nothing to celebrate and it is rather bizarre that a forum such as the Pan-African Parliament is used to promote a regime with such poor human rights record.

Africa should stop using double standards. It should show the same concern to Ethiopia as it has done for Kenya and Zimbabwe. It is ridiculous to put Meles at the helm of NEPAD when in fact he is a leader of an illegal minority regime. The "war on terror" should not be used to cover up human right abuses in the Horn of Africa. Therefore, we call upon the international community to disassociate itself from this undemocratic regime.

**BOYCOTT MELES ZENAWI'S PARTY!
FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS! FREE TEDY AFRO!
STOP THE WAR IN THE OGDEN! STOP THE WAR IN SOMALIA!
WE DEMAND A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION IN ETHIOPIA!**